GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:481
ANSWERED ON:26.07.2000
INDIANS HELD HOSTAGE ABROAD
AVTAR SINGH BHADANA;KAMAL NATH;RENUKA CHOWDHURY;SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of Indian soldiers and others comprising the Indian contingent to the UN Peace Keeping Force in Sierra Leone and elsewhere are in detention abroad as hostage or otherwise;

(b) if so, the details in this regard including since when they are in captivity;

(c) the number of those, if any, missing;

(d) the efforts made/proposed to be made to get them released;

(e) whether the United Nations had made any move/decided to replace the commander of the UN Peace Keeping Force in Sierra Leone;

(f) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
(g) the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a) & (b) No, Sir. At present there are no Indian soldiers in detention or under siege in Sierra Leone or elsewhere.

(c) There are no Indian peacekeepers missing.

(d), (e) (f) & (g) The United Nations is considering upgradation of post of the Force Commander of the UN Peace Keeping Force in Sierra Leone in view of rapid expansion of the force level, and in accordance with its norms.